



Department of Fair Employment and Housing

# Fair Housing

## *You Are Protected Under California Law!*

Laws enforced by the Department of Fair Employment and Housing (DFEH) protect you from illegal **discrimination** and **harassment** in housing based on

- **Race**
- **Color**
- **Religion**
- **Sex** (gender)
- **Sexual orientation**
- **Marital status**
- **National origin** (including language use restrictions)
- **Ancestry**
- **Familial status** (households with children under age 18)
- **Source of income\***
- **Disability** (mental and physical, including HIV and AIDS)
- **Medical condition** (cancer/genetic characteristics)
- **Age**

Common violations of the *Fair Employment and Housing Act*, based on the categories listed above, include the following:

- **Refusal to rent, lease, or sell housing**
- **Sexual harassment** involving unwanted sexual advances or requiring sexual favors for housing rights or privileges
- **Discriminatory policies, practices, terms, or conditions** that result in unequal access to housing or housing-related services
- **Creating property documents**, such as deeds and CC&Rs, that contain restrictive covenants limiting sale, rental, or use
- **Denial of a home loan or homeowner’s insurance**
- **Failure to provide reasonable accommodation** in rules, policies, practices or procedures, when necessary, to accommodate a disability
- **Refusal to permit reasonable modification** at the tenant’s expense, when necessary, to accommodate a disability

It is also illegal for cities, counties, or local government agencies to make zoning or land-use decisions or policies that unlawfully discriminate against you based on the categories listed above.

\*Until 12/31/04 unless extended by statute.

### *What DFEH Does*

The Department of Fair Employment and Housing:

- **Enforces** the *Fair Employment and Housing Act*, the *Ralph Civil Rights Act*, and the *Unruh Civil Rights Act*
- **Investigates** harassment, discrimination, and hate violence complaints
- **Helps landlords and tenants** to resolve complaints involving alleged violations of the laws enforced by DFEH
- **Files lawsuits** against those violating the laws enforced by DFEH
- **Educates Californians** about the laws against discrimination, harassment, and hate violence

### *You have the right to complain about housing discrimination!*

If you believe you have experienced illegal discrimination or harassment, you can explore filing a complaint with DFEH by taking the following steps within **one year** of the incident:

- **Contact us** in writing or at our toll-free number (800) 233-3212
- **Provide specific facts** about the incident
- **Provide copies** of documents that support the charges in your complaint
- **Keep records and documents** about the complaint, such as rent receipts, applications, and other potential proof of discrimination

If your complaint is accepted, DFEH will conduct an impartial investigation. DFEH is a neutral fact-finder and does not represent you or the parties named in the complaint. Our role is to determine if the law has been violated. If possible, we try to assist both parties to resolve the complaint. Examples of resolution could include:

- **Making available** previously denied housing
- **Compensation** for losses and emotional distress
- **Training and policy changes** to prevent future discrimination
- **Other actions** to eliminate the effects of discrimination

If DFEH is unable to resolve the complaint, and there is sufficient evidence to establish a violation of the law, the matter may be litigated by DFEH before the Fair Employment and Housing Commission or in civil court.

For more information, contact DFEH toll free at **(800) 233-3212**, Oakland area & out-of-state at **(510) 622-2945** or **2946**, TTY number at **(800) 700-2320**, or visit our web site at **[www.dfeh.ca.gov](http://www.dfeh.ca.gov)**

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